

**Date: 03-12-11**  
**Author: Lou Leeburg**  
**Category: Oral History**  
**Interview Date: March 12, 2011, 1– 3:00 P.M. EDT**  
**Place: Fetzer Institute**  
**Interviewee: Lou Leeburg**  
**Interviewer: Larry Massie**  
**Attendees: Lou Leeburg, Larry Massie, Tom Beaver**  
**Topic: John Fetzer's Spiritual Search**  
**Draft: April 7, 2011**  
**Edited: November 15, 2017**

Larry Lou, as you know, this project centers around some more details of John's spirituality in particular. I read your interview with Phil that was done in '96 and there's some good information there. We're hoping that maybe there's some other things, particularly about his spirituality, that might have lodged themselves in your brain.

I'd like to start with one question. You said that you witnessed some of John's sense of humor, and that he could sometimes have like a deadpan sense of humor, playing a joke on people. Do you think that any of these things could be misinterpreted by people, in that he was actually joking? For example, the troll? Could he have been joking about that, and people took him seriously?

Lou It's possible. This was a time when we had Glenn Olds threatening ways in which to get back at Mr. Fetzer. I just said, "Mr. Fetzer," I said, "it's a real simple answer. We just talk about everything in metaphor." It was a way to disarm that. Whether he had a true belief in trolls or not, to me it was immaterial. That's not something that goes [belongs??] in a court of law; so that was a way in which to sit down and say, "Okay, let's just talk about this realistically; we're trying to deal with a situation. What's the best way to deal with it?"

I guess didn't look at that as, that's his sense of humor. When I look at his humor, I recall an instance at Halloween. I said, "Glenn Olds didn't want us to do Halloween because he thought we were celebrating Satan." I said, "That's a joke. Come on." I came up with the idea that we would all pitch in some money, and we would have a contest, to try to help out some of the staff (who probably could use the money), we would give awards to whoever had the best costume. Mr. Fetzer joined in. We got him a robe, a judge's robe, and he wore this big nose.

Larry Like a clown nose?

Lou Like Cyrano De Bergerac.

Tom There are photographs of that.

Lou There's a photograph, yes, and I dressed up like an old hag. Everybody had a good time. We all cracked up, because we had a program meeting where he comes in all dressed up like that. Bruce came in like a 20's go-go lady.

Larry A flapper?

Lou A flapper. We all laughed because Bruce, dressing up like a female, and then picking the outfit—it was just hilarious to see him in a program meeting presenting. We said, "Bruce, cross your legs!"

Larry Did Glenn participate in this?

Lou Glenn was already out by then.

Larry Oh, okay.

Lou That was post-Glenn. But I brought up the idea, we've got to start having some fun around here.

Larry Yes, really.

Lou Mr. Fetzer, I think, truly appreciated the idea that we could bring some humor back into these situations, rather than just always being so serious.

Larry We were talking to Carolyn Dailey yesterday, and she said that after John died, this place was kind of like scary, like a mausoleum. When he was alive, and you were interacting here, did it seem that way?

Lou That it was like a mausoleum?

Larry That it was a scary place, with long corridors.

Lou Never to me; but I could understand maybe people felt that way the first time. I always remember people coming in here and getting lost, because there were only three sides to the room instead of four. But in terms of being scary, no. It was sometimes too vacant. That was probably a more common comment: "Where are the people?" But I wouldn't call that scary.

Larry There were staff members that had some paranormal experiences in the hallways and things, afterwards, but you never saw anything like that?

Lou No. We talked about it, and sometimes there would be people late at night who envisioned something. Again, I don't think anything here was rejected. Some of our scientific efforts were to sit there and say, "Okay, it's an area where it would

probably pop up more here than it would at a normal location, because this is an area in which we are very much interested.”

Larry Yes.

Lou Tom always talked about Mr. Fetzer wanting to have spiritual experiences, and you’re saying, “You really are.” But sometimes you don’t recognize one in that fashion, when you’re trying to have a paranormal experience. We certainly wanted to have certain experiences, such as being out of the body. But I always thought those were in the context of whatever the person was doing.

Whether it was a Michael Harner, the shaman, or back in the days when we first started here and Mr. Fetzer would participate. We had the Elmer Green people, and we would go through processes trying to elicit some of our additional brain waves that would be more creative. I don’t remember, in that 1988-89 time period, whether we did many things that were in the paranormal; but we were certainly funding some of the work that had been done. Whether it was SRI work, or the work done by some of these other folks, that was an area of interest. I personally didn’t experience anything unusual related to the building.

Larry Did you meditate? Did you learn to meditate at that time?

Lou I was probably introduced to meditation when I first came here. I became more of a meditator subsequent to Mr. Fetzer’s death than before, because of being introduced to a lot more of the experiential methods that I first got introduced to. Later on, becoming involved with the folks at IONS, where the experiential was part of every Board meeting, we’d spend one day in some type of experiential experience.

Larry What do you mean by experiential?

Lou For example, if you had brought in a shaman to do a drumming session, we would have a drumming session; we’d participate with some of the bigger funders of the organizations, as well as the Board, in an experiential practice. Whether it was dealing with shamans, or it was dealing with holotropic breathwork, or it was—we did a sweat lodge one day, the idea was, this is to get people to experience it, because an experience is much more lasting than having a discussion about it.

Larry Sure.

Lou We would ask, can you feel it? Can you start to sense what it means to be out-of-body, rather than talking about it and getting a lecture on it?

Larry Did you try astral projection?

Lou I’ve tried astral projection, but that was never something that I found that—

Larry I guess everybody can't do it, you know.

Lou I found more that the ability simply to go to places where you try to gain knowledge is to me the best out-of-body. I don't know where I was projecting to. I was using what I'd call more of the shaman way, where I was looking for the teachers; whether it was the lower realm, upper realm, was I now astral projecting?

Larry Did you feel that your mind was leaving your body?

Lou Oh, without a doubt, yes. When I first went through that, I was the true skeptic. I said, this can't be. There's no such thing. But, when you experience it, you say, Oh, there's something happening.

Larry Did you ever feel yourself going toward a light?

Lou No, not really. I should say light is involved in it, but I wouldn't say that it was like the near-death experience that people talk about. I didn't see my light. I saw the light more welcoming me into another place. Whether you're going into the upper realm, because you associate sometimes with going up with light, you weren't necessarily going into a lower realm. It wasn't necessarily light, but you envision all kinds of things when you're in that space.

Larry This was very relevant to you, your introduction by John to this way of thinking, and your own expanding your own spiritual beliefs.

Lou I call John Fetzer infectious. He had a way that he could talk about things that were totally out of the realm that I grew up in. I grew up in a Christian-type environment, where, as I kept telling him, I had an open mind. We would talk about whether it was America's Agony, or talk about some of the different things that were in his biography, which that I didn't have experience myself with.

Tom Like what, Lou?

Lou For example, we talked for hours sometimes about UFOs. We talked about the fact that I didn't quite understand the language at the time, for example, the White Brotherhood. I've talked to Tom subsequently, about America's Agony having indications. I kept thinking, this sounds like really New Age stuff, and yet this was written in '68. This was way before a lot of the New Age stuff that I was aware of. I said to him, "What are your influences here?" I was never really given a good answer by Mr. Fetzer.

Larry What influenced him?

Lou We need to write that. Later on we said, there are certainly Masonic teachings, and there are the Theosophical, and there are a lot of other things I've learned. Maybe that's where he was coming from. From his standpoint, he had a way of deflecting questions and redirecting them where he wanted to go, so we would talk about some of these concepts. Then he'd say, "Now how do you take that?" I'd say, "Oh, that's something I could be open to." We would talk about reincarnation; we'd talk about the statues thing down there (in The Hall of Records at the Institute). There was a discussion of how we might deflect some of the comments that were coming from Glenn, when Glenn was threatening a counter-lawsuit to our firing him.

Larry Oh, really?

Lou We would say, "Now we're dealing with the trolls in the basement." Glenn had written about that. We talked about the ones that were protecting the property, from here to the lake. We would talk about the reincarnated seven figures, and we've all been here together. He had a way in which to use all that in a destructive way, Glenn did.

Larry Glenn did.

Lou We were asking, "Okay, what's a rational way to respond to that? That would be a good defense in court." It would be honest, but done in a way that we felt would win the argument per se.

Larry Right.

Tom What did he say to you about the seven busts? Did he ever tell you these were his past lives?

Lou He said, "We all have a piece of the past." Because I often said, "You know, Mr. Fetzer, if someone looked at my past lives, I'd be a peon in every one of these," and I would kind of laugh. He'd say, "You know, we all have a bit of history within us, and it's all within the atmosphere." He had a way of trying to generalize it, rather than be specific. He said it was like we all had that inspiration of these characters. Instead of saying outright, "That was me in that lifetime," he softened it.

I heard a better explanation from Jim Gordon than I did from Mr. Fetzer. Mr. Fetzer was used to deflecting comments about himself being a public figure, and being someone who said, "Every three years I've got to get a license renewal, so I've got to be swift on my feet. I can defend whatever I've done, whatever I've put in writing, whatever I've said, in a way that can still be accepted by the general public."

Tom Did he talk about people reincarnating together? Did he ever talk to you about that?

Lou He didn't talk to me directly about it. This was what the 20 years has done. I heard so much stuff from Rob, I started thinking, "He's hearing the same thing I'm hearing; maybe that's where he got it from." I don't recall Mr. Fetzer talking about reincarnating as a community.

Tom What did he say about UFOs to you, anything specific?

Lou UFOs were going through because there obviously was a section of the book, the biography, that talked about the UFOs.

Larry This is the Thinner book you're talking about?

Lou The Thinner book, yes.

Larry Okay.

Lou I reluctantly call it the Thinner book, because we rewrote so much of it, we didn't want to take his name off it to be sued. On the other hand, it was changed pretty radically.

Larry Who did the changing?

Lou First of all, Mr. Fetzer tried to change it; and that's why I went to him and said, "You know, you can't change history." Carolyn was good at this. We'd go in there and say, "Mr. Fetzer, we know this was a fact because we've got other ways in which to verify it." He would say, "Well, let's say it this way," and we'd say, "No."

Larry He used a pair of scissors on some documents, too.

Lou Yes, but I can understand where he was coming from. In the end, we ended it finally by saying, we've got a copy edited. We had a book that had the fundamental stories that he was trying to tell. Although when push came to shove, I don't think it was a story that he wanted out to the general public. So I said, "Look, this is a vanity piece. This is a piece that's going to sit around here and, if you had your best friends sitting at this table, is this the book you want to read?" That's when he started saying, "Well, you know, I'd take out these first five chapters." The first five chapters really were foundational. This was the story of the vision he had in the elevator. This was the story of him going through and surviving the pandemic.

Larry Yes.

Lou This was the story of him meeting his wife. Any time we started getting in areas that became personal, really personal, he had a certain reluctance, and would say, "I don't know how much I want to share." Then he'd say to me, "Well, these aren't really that important." I would respond, "What do you really find important?" He said, "In broadcasting there's one major story that I think I can uniquely tell, and that's the five-ninety case." He said, "That case was a landmark case in broadcasting; over 3,000 licenses have been issued since then because of that particular case." And he said, "I'm probably the only one that can really tell the full story."

Larry He was proud of his role in that.

Lou Very, very proud of that. We talked about the fact that he had the group of 15 broadcasters that went with Eisenhower back to Germany after World War II. They had this old agreement that they were celebrating in France at the time; they were having champagne and decided to save this one last bottle of champagne. The idea would be, the last one that was alive was to drink a toast to all the 14 that passed. Well, he outlasted everybody.

Larry Oh, did he?

Lou Although the bottle disappeared, the story remained that he was the last of the survivors. One of the fellows that was in there had started the magazine, Broadcasting Age, one of the big top deals. His son was still running that, so Mr. Fetzer said, "We've got to get to him and see maybe he'll want the story." We contacted him. He was very nice, but it wasn't a current story; the guy was nice to us, but we didn't see that as an avenue in terms of getting that story out. It's kind of still tucked in the book.

Larry Okay.

Lou Then we looked at the baseball book. I'd say the baseball book that Thinnes had put together was a couple of thousand pages, and missed the whole story.

Larry Really?

Lou That's when we said, "Okay, who could really write this story?" We thought of different people. We thought of some of the folks, the sports people that follow the Tigers there in Detroit; we ended up with Dan Ewald, who used to follow Mr. Fetzer. Fetzer had brought him over from either the News or the Detroit Free Press, and had hired him to work for him. He went into Mr. Fetzer's study there, and this was right before Hawaii; Mr. Fetzer had the power of a young John Fetzer for about two hours. You could see that this was important. What we came up with was, there were three vital things that he wanted to tell in his baseball story. He was looking at what was the unique position he might play in history

and, therefore, should be making sure that the people were aware of his story. And that's all included if you look in On a Handshake.

Larry Did he ever see that?

Lou He did not see the finished version. He passed before that, but the good news is that Dan Ewald wrote it, and he had worked for the chief. He knew him. He knew the passion that Mr. Fetzer had for these issues. I worked with Dan, saying, "You know, do the story that you want to do. You're the author, but these issues have got to be addressed. You know how much the chief felt that these were critical to the time period of his ownership of the Tigers." Those are all included in there.

Larry Why do you think the Hegedus book was never really made public?

Lou Hegedus book was never intended to be a public book.

Larry It wasn't?

Lou This came out of the Memorial Trust. The idea was, "There's the spiritual side of John Fetzer." Carolyn Dailey at the time was still on the staff of the Institute prior to her retirement; at Rob's prompting she ran around and started interviewing people. I got involved because there was no book, and after six years, we were asking, "When are we going to have something out of this?" I usually got assigned to those kind of tasks, so I started pushing Carolyn.

Larry You were the taskmaster.

Lou I was more of a task-tracker, asking, What's the end goal here? As a result of that, there was a book that was produced. At that time I said, "Oh, we need to provide in the archive. Where are the sources for all this?" It turned out she wasn't as well organized as we had hoped; she had taken liberties, which again surprised us—that a quote was not a quote. She would redo a quote to say what was intended, not necessarily what was said. I said, "That's a no-no." I proceeded, with a lot of help from Carolyn (Dailey), from Linda Grdina, and then from Amy (Ferguson); and we went through the book, and every time there was a quote, we prepared the documentation. It's in the archives now, two boxes that we set up, to support the 280-something quotes that are in that book.

Larry The sources?

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Lou The sources of that is all there, so if you're a historian, you can sit there and say, "I might not necessarily like the content of the book, but I like these quotes. Where did you get those from? Where was John Fetzer?" You can go back to the source and see every individual one.



Larry Too bad she didn't footnote them. That could have been easily done.

Lou They're footnoted now. We did that.

Larry Oh, did you?

Lou It's all done.

Larry Okay.

Lou You can take the footnote from the book, you can now go and get the actual source. I wanted to have it here at the Institute.

Larry But it's not in the book there, right?

Lou Oh, it's in the back of the book.

Larry I don't remember seeing it that way, okay.

Lou For every quote you see in there, we have the original source; you can follow it by going to the back of the book, and then to the archive.

Larry Okay, good.

Tom That being said, is the book around?

Lou Carol's book should be here.

Tom I know, but is it visible?

Lou What happened was, we ran out of print. It went out for limited print, because Rob said, "This is kind of an internal document." Part of the reason is that Carol did a little psychoanalysis on John that may be right on, may not be. Certain people, including myself, looked at it and said, "This is not the way I would interpret John Fetzer." I thought the benefit of the book was the fact that it quoted John Fetzer; here's a lot of original language from Mr. Fetzer, and it was put together in a relatively credible way.

I think there's some psycho-babble in between, my own personal interpretation. Then others might look at that and say, "She's right on." I just happen to disagree with some of the conclusions she came to. I thought, let people read John Fetzer. Don't interpret him. This was also part of the problem I had when I looked at the quotes. I found that she took entire pages of quotes from him and said, "Oh, I'm going to interpret; this is what he meant." The man speaks for himself.

I do think that it is important to know the context in which he gave some quotes. Of the things that are vital now, one is the fact that John Fetzer now would be 110 of age; you've got to look at what occurred in his timeframe that would put him in a particular mindset. Also, the language he used was of his time. When he and I would talk, I'd listen, and say, "You're a product of the Depression."

This was a Depression Era man, who started his business because of the Depression. The school could no longer afford a public service radio, which is what it was at WEMC. Here was a guy in the heart of the Depression, which started in 1929—1930. That was not the deepest part of the recession. The deepest part of the recession was two or three years later, when everyone thought there was recovery. But 1934 was probably the hardest time period in his life, in terms of business.

At that at the same time, when the five-ninety case was out there, he was trying to deal with the fact that he could only broadcast during the day; at nighttime he had to curtail his signal, because station WOW in Omaha was complaining of interference. He had the folks there in New York complaining. But with his directional antenna, it allowed him to service his constituents. He had to make that argument." Then again, he was persistent. Every way, every place he had to go to get the approval, he eventually got approval. It took him a long time and it took a lot of money. That's why he started spending six months of the year in Washington, D.C., with his wife here [in Michigan??], running the radio station.

Larry Getting back to the Hegedus book, there are some errors of fact in there, too, with varying interpretations of the elevator experience.

Lou Yes.

Larry Now I think in her book she states that a few days before he had this experience with Jesus pulling him up the elevator shaft, he was fooling around in an elevator and had too many kids on it; it fell down to the bottom and hit some bumpers. Of course, they weren't hurt, but that must have been a terrifying experience. One interpretation of his dream about Jesus would be, that's natural for somebody almost dying on an elevator to subconsciously dream of Jesus. What do you think about that?

Lou Mr. Fetzer never referred to that incident.

Larry He didn't?

Lou This is where there are these varying stories.

Larry Okay.

Lou The story that I heard was the one that was in the Thinnies book, so that's what I went over with Mr. Fetzer.

Larry Okay.

Lou The one that I discussed with him, he said it's an experience that he had, and it will be with him forever.

Larry Okay.

Lou It was this vision. At that time, I thought it was more of an angel figure. The figure basically was telling him that everything was going to be all right, that if he looked at his future, that the future would be bright. In fact, his vision gave him a kind of inner awareness that he had, in effect, a spiritual path to proceed on. Then when I talked to him later about when he was 17 years old. He had got a couple of relatives who died because of the pandemic, it was clear that he got sick. I asked, as always, "Did you really remember this, or was this the way in which you and your sister and your mother talked about it?" Because the story gets a little bit changed by time.

Larry Oh, every story does that.

Lou But in terms of whether he had an elevator incident prior to that one, he never ever brought that up to me.

Larry Okay.

Larry Did he to you, Tom?

Tom No.

Lou I think that had been significant. We were talking about what was in the book, because at that time we'd do a chapter. He would read through the chapter, or he'd have Carmen Cook read the chapter to him, and say to him, Is this all right? This the method we were going with. Once I had all those finished, then we took the whole book, and I gave it to a copy editor in New York, who fixed up the language so it could actually read a little more smoothly.

Larry Okay.

Lou Then it came back to him and, I asked, "Okay, do you want to read it one more time?" That's when I had the discussion, "Where's this going? Do you really want 1,000 copies set out here in print for people to read?" That's when he started re-thinking . . .

Larry Take out the first six chapters.

Lou H would say, "Let's do this, let's do that." Then it was, "Well, I don't really want that book out there." That's when the project was stalled. Then he got very, very ill, and we agreed to put that to the side.

Tom What did he say to you about UFOs?

Lou This is where I get a little mixed up, because I had a UFO discussion with him, and then subsequently with Judy (Skutch-Whitson).

I always thought that his presentation, a pretty long presentation he gave to the local club here, was the result of the work that he'd done when he was head of what I call the precursor to the CIA, when they'd look at everybody's internal documents including the Defense Department's. He had put together what looked like a fairly well-researched piece that he gave at the club. All of a sudden there was a lag, in terms of his written deal about (inaudible) UFOs, until he met Judy. Then Judy's sister and husband were lost at sea, which therefore, became another interest, that this may have been UFO related. I believe it was through Judy that he met John Mack; John Mack then went to Harvard, and set up the studies that there are on UFOs at Harvard. I always felt that his primary interest was really up from post-World War II.

Larry Yes.

Lou It was certainly acknowledging UFOs, maybe with Judy, but that was not really a primary area of interest. It was more like, could it have been the UFOs? To a certain degree I think he felt that he had done all the work he needed to do there; I didn't see that, in his spiritual path, it was that important to him.

Tom Did he ever discuss UFOs with you?

Lou We both came to the conclusion that we both believed that UFOs were for real. But, the question I always put out on UFOs, which he didn't disagree with, but I wouldn't say he agreed with, was: If these people were so smart to be here, they are much smarter than we are. They'll figure out how to use us rather than us figuring out how to use them. For me, it became an 'It is what it is' type of thing. There was never a real deep discussion beyond that.

Larry Did he ever tell you he wanted to be taken?

Lou No, he never did.

Larry Carolyn has that impression, that that's why he liked to be out in Arizona, because he thought that was like a logical place where they would come.

Lou Again, I dealt with Mr. Fetzer a lot with his business side.

Tom When did you come in here? What year?

Lou I first met him in August of '88, and came to work here in January of '89. I felt that he really didn't have people at that time that he felt very, very comfortable talking with about his business interests and his business history. That included most of the people he did introduce me to, from Carl Lee to Jerry Luptak to Mike Meier. And I would discuss this with him. It was Luptak to Jay Fishman, all these folks, and there weren't people that he felt comfortable about sitting down and talking about and rehashing some of his history, and also some of his concerns. The first concern was, could you go back and look at all of the transactions that occurred on selling these assets off? Could you do an audit, just follow the money? And in doing so, we found some discrepancies, and found over a million dollars for him that went into the wrong hands.

Larry I mean within his organization?

Lou Yes, it was Carl Lee. His young pup, as Mr. Fetzer called it. He brought him in in 1940, for the radio broadcast deal, and mentored him for all those years. When the TV sale was going through, that was when he had his heart attack. He believed that was somewhat related to the stress of that process. While he was in the hospital, they'd bring in these stacks of documents to sign. He said, "Lou, I can tell you, I didn't know what I was signing," and he said, "I was not in a condition to really know." He said, "I really relied on Carl Lee and the other parties as financial guides," he said, "So look at it with an auditor's eye. Be a little bit skeptical."

I started looking at things. At the same time that the TV stations were put over into one category, Cablevision was separated as a separate entity; and the radio stations were another category. That was a way in which the books were separated out. Further, the Cablevision sold, and then the Fetzer Broadcasting Service became only the radio station in which Mr. Fetzer maintained a minority interest. And we followed the money, as in, how did this get divvied up? All of a sudden we started noticing that there was this asset of Cablevision that was transferred over to the books of Fetzer Broadcasting Service. Carl Lee would own 75 percent of Fetzer Broadcasting Service; but it really was owed to John Fetzer.

Larry So it wasn't an accident? It was deliberate in your opinion?

Lou The records pretty much speak for themselves. We worked out a deal. Mr. Fetzer was, I can tell you personally, quite disappointed.

Larry I'll bet.

Lou I said to him, "Why don't we play good cop, bad cop?" He said, "What's your idea?" I said, "Okay, we'll lay this out." I had been meeting with Carl Lee. And Carl was as cooperative, more cooperative than I would have expected. I was first

going to get him to admit that I had the documents. Sometimes people go, “Oh, well no, that doesn’t exist. You’re misinterpreting that.” I pretty much laid it out and I said, “This is what the records show,” and, “Oh yeah, that’s the way it is.” At least when I went back to Mr. Fetzer, I could say, He’s acknowledged this. Then the idea was, he owes a certain amount of money here that, in effect, should have gone through with the assets that were transferred to what would now be the Fetzer Institute. The ownership of that should go back to Mr. Fetzer.

Part of all this was, Mr. Fetzer had me go through and break up all of his remaining dealings with people like Jim Campbell who was the general manager of the Tigers. We had dealings with Carl Lee, and related assets in Grand Rapids, and the radio stations, and we had contracts for services. There were some little funny games going on, but I won’t go into details. For the tax purposes, these were transactions that we were basically thinking, let’s put those to bed. We were making sure that all of the dealings with Evans and Luptak were put to bed, which went back to some of his dealings with Jerry Luptak and Mike Meier.

We were looking at trying to get all this sorted out, in effect to unclutter his life. He was saying, “Okay, that’s the past. Let’s get rid of them.” I’d had these bargains with Carl relating to that; when we came to this issue it was, at the end of the day there was an interest owed to the Institute, there was an interest owed to John Fetzer. I said, “Mr. Fetzer, here you’re 88 years old,” and I said, “Here’s the idea. You go to him and say, “Look, Carl, you know I’d like to see this all resolved amicably. It seemed like this was a good way to do it. Why don’t we do this? Why don’t you settle my deal with cash, and I will convince Lou to take a note and work out fair terms with you.” He said, “I think I can put that kind of pressure on him.” I said, “Make it look like you’re going out of your way to do something to resolve it, but you yourself are clean, okay?” Then I gave him the reasons as to why it should be this way. Mr. Fetzer said, “I kind of like that. I kind of like that.” So he had a way. He to see Carl the next day, laid out the deal and, of course, Carl said, “Oh, absolutely.” Mr. Fetzer came back and said, “Okay, Lou, now it’s time for you to go ahead.”

I went in on the note deal and I said, “Now that you’re finally admitting you owe us anything (because on our books it was zero, so we had nothing for this), I said, “Here’s the note. Here’s how we’re going to construct it. Here are the terms. And then I said, “Oh, by the way, Carl, if you sell these things, it’s a Due on Sale clause; I don’t want you bailing out and transferring it, because we already had this transferred note when it came to the broadcasting properties. (That was a \$15 million note, which is a whole other story that we were working on at the same time.) I said, “Okay, let’s have it so that we can at least learn from what didn’t work before.” We set up a note. We had a decent interest rate on it and, sure enough, within probably 12 months, Carl did sell the properties. We got the note paid in full for the Fetzer Institute, because ours was a debt at closing; he couldn’t close without us signing off, and I had it written in the escrow that our money had to be put aside, plus interest, so that we were fully satisfied.

It was the final separation from Carl Lee, in which we maintained a reasonable relationship with him; but he clearly wasn't interested in what the Institute was doing. Carl had always hoped that Mr. Fetzer would turn over all these assets, keep them, and Fetzer Broadcast would be run by Carl Lee for the benefit of the Institute. And that obviously never happened. I probably went way too much more into that story than you needed.

Larry There's just one thing that I'd like to get in my mind financial-wise, and this happened before you came along; but maybe there were still vestiges of it that you know about. He gave a million dollars to Western in 1983, for part of the Fetzer building.

Lou He gave a commitment to give a million dollars. He did it over time.

Larry That's what I heard at the time; that was shrewd of him to do that, very shrewd? Basically, they got the interest for a million, isn't that right?

Lou No. They got paid, in effect, less than a million dollars, if you want to do the present value of it. From my discussion with him, he went to them and said, "What does it take to get the name on the building?"

Larry Okay.

Larry They'd approached him first though.

Lou Yes, but by today's standard it was relatively cheap. Then he said, "Okay, then it's a million dollars, and I'll pay you that over four years or over a time period." So he kept the interest, and then we had a grant, dividing up for three years or four.

Larry Okay. That was my understanding because I did that exhibit in that building.

Lou Okay, we did that with Western, the same thing we did with the Hall of Fame.

Larry Okay.

Lou And the Museum of Broadcasting. We said, we'll give you the gross amount, and then we'll divide it up and spread it over time, so actually we might be able to give you less than that—in fair market value terms, because we're going to take the earnings on your money while we're waiting to pay you.

Larry Okay.

Lou Luckily the markets cooperated with us.

Tom I'm sure he probably talked to you about the mission of the Institute, and that has spiritual ramifications. It has spiritual origins, and I believe you and he had talks about that, because you encouraged him to write some things down. What were your conversations about the mission of the Institute, as far as trying to carry out his spiritual beliefs, his spiritual interests, and not allowing them to fritter away? You were watching his struggles with Glenn, so that was a big issue even at the time when he was alive.

Would his spiritual interests have any chance of surviving even while he was alive?

I believe he did have discussions with you about that, and probably plenty of them, so how did that go? What were his spiritual interests, as far as what he told you?

Lou He kept referring to the fact that, as far as the way he saw it, his mission and his spiritual interests were going to take a unique group of people to put into action. That's why I talked about the white paper that Bruce, Carolyn and I finally got him to write. We said, is there some kind of guidance that you can give this group of Trustees that you have, plus the future, some kind of idea of what is it they should be clinging to? We were probably more concerned with how you hold onto these things, rather than the actual content, per se. Because I would just defer to him and say, "This is your mission. I want to help you in this." I am more of a, "How can I, in my role as an administrative person, really help facilitate what you want?"

We talked about, for example, his relationship with Henry Ford II. He reiterated the fact that Henry explained to him how he started listening to consultants; how he then added these members to the Board; and how then the Board decided it should no longer be based in Detroit and it should go to New York. Then finally he kind of came to the realization that one day there was a Board vote: it was 17 to one and he was the one. He realized that he had absolutely no control over this Board, nor did he feel the Board was responding to the mission that he felt the Ford Foundation was supposed to be responding to. Mr. Fetzer said, "I would hate to see that happen."

So we discussed the idea of, what do you do to keep that kind of mission? And we talked about Kellogg, same way. If you looked at some of the founding principles of W. K. Kellogg, you didn't see that in the current Kellogg Foundation. There is always a concern. We may not necessarily have answers, but he always related to back to, it was going to be the people, that he [would rely on]. That's what I was bringing up yesterday. There's a certain group of people that he instinctively had a gut feeling for were the right people. He always trusted his instincts. Someone can say he had a sparkle in his eye or there was this way in which you either got it or you didn't get it; if you didn't get it, there were many



people that he hired that didn't get it, okay? He would play that out for a time period, but then he would always be out there looking for more people.

At that stage, when I met him, it was his last couple years of his life. I often joked with him, "You don't have too many more times to get it right." This was when we were going from Glenn Olds to Rob Lehman. How do you know this is going to work? It was more of, is there a way in which we can somehow preserve what it is that you want, even though you don't know how to get there? I was more worried about, are there ways in which that's translated more than what is the content of what you mean? Which is what I liked. Then when the Trust was formed, I observed that the first thing Rob started doing was parsing Mr. Fetzer's old speeches, and saying, what does he mean by this? What does he mean by this? That was the first time I started thinking, "Oh, he's seeing more depth in this than I saw."

I think in my 20 years of being on the Trust, I probably have a much better appreciation now than I did when I was in my 30's listening to him. At that time, my attitude was, how can I help you in this? But I didn't necessarily fully grasp what he was talking about, to be honest, because a lot of it was over my head. He was 51 years older than me. He had a lot of life experiences that, to him, were automatic. 'How do you know that?' 'I just do.' As I get older I can say, Yes, those things I know, too; and people look at me, and ask, how do you know that? I say, I've lived it.

Larry Yes, it wasn't intuition. It was experience.

Lou Experience.

Larry Did he ever tell you that this was his last go around to do this, that he wasn't coming back?

Lou That goes back in the reincarnation.

Larry Yes.

Lou He said it in less direct ways than that, but he kept talking about it. He believed that he had tried this before, and that he was hoping this was going to be his last time to have to do it.

Larry Okay.

Lou It was almost like it was a pep talk. 'This is what I'm trying to get done,' and that was more in a business environment. 'Let's get this thing right. I've done this before.'

Tom Did he talk about how he had done it before? Any details of that?

Lou I would say not. We had some of the vague references to some of the statues down there, and how did that really encapsulate what he might have done or not done. But I can't recall that there were many direct conversations that were any different than what you already know. When I hear other people's kind of stories, none of it really surprises me.

Tom We're not going to have any stories of the busts really, except from Jim Gordon when we get it from him, because everybody else is saying it kind of as you are now. I can be more direct in my interview because John did talk to me about it. He was getting the busts done when I was with him, so we'd go over there; he knew I was into it, so he wasn't shy to talk to me about it, because he knew I was right there with it.

Larry Did he—go ahead, I'm sorry.

Tom But otherwise, he spoke more generally, because Carolyn didn't really seem to have much to say about that, nor did Mike.

Larry How did it become like a general feeling that those who were John's past lives? Those were each people he was.

Lou When I first went there, I thought we had a brochure or something that had some kind of reference to those. Part of the story I got was from Glenn Olds.

Larry He was against it, yes.

Lou He was against it, but he had a way in which to craft his own story; and you could ask, was that Mr. Fetzer's story, or was that Glenn Olds making up a story? Glenn found it very easy to create his own stories; that's why sometimes I look back at that time and I wonder, Did I have that talk with Mr. Fetzer, or was that with Glenn? When it came to the busts, I would say I had more talks with Glenn about the busts than I did with Mr. Fetzer. With Mr. Fetzer, he's the chief; if he wants certain things done, that wasn't relevant to what we were talking about. I spent probably more time with him discussing his business career and his interests there, what that led to, and the people. When it came to more of the faith-based or the spiritual-type ideas, he had his point of view and he was certain. As I told him, I was interested. I did not necessarily share his certainty, because some of those things I had never experienced before.

Larry More of an agnostic then?

Lou I would say I'd like to explore that further, and in the 20 years since then I've explored a lot more of that. I'd have a whole different discussion with him today

- than I had back then. Back then, I would comment, oh wow, did that really happen?
- Tom Did he ever say to you that you had been together in a past life? Because he would tend to say that to people. He never said that to me, but he would tend to say that to people.
- Lou He never said that to me, but I heard that from Glenn, of all people. Glenn said that Jim had told Mr. Fetzer all this information. Glenn would sometimes be kind of onboard with all this, and other times be totally against it. It was almost like, Which Glenn are you talking to? I definitely heard that we had been in this before.
- Tom You and John?
- Lou Yes; supposedly Mr. Fetzer had a full reading on me before I met him. My first experience, when I came here to do an interview, was Glenn Olds trying to warn me that I was going up to meet Mr. Fetzer, and that he could be a little strange. He tried to give me all this buffering, because he didn't exactly know how I was going to relate to Mr. Fetzer, I guess. Glenn was cautionary and basically saying, he's an old man. Sometimes he might talk about strange things, and he might see things that you don't see. I thought, Is this guy delusional or what? I had it on my little agenda that I was supposed to see Mr. Fetzer for half an hour; I walked into Mr. Fetzer and he was magnanimous. He said, "Oh, it's great for you to come here." He sat down, and we proceeded to talk, for two and a half hours. I remember his closing by saying, "Hey, we better get down stairs. They'll probably think I kidnapped you."
- We had a fantastic first meeting. It was left with the idea, he said, "I really hope you come to work here." As I was walking toward the door he said, "Oh, by the way," he said, "would you mind, if you came here to work, would you help me with some of my personal issues?" I said, "Hey, it's your money. If you want me to do that, I will do that." That's how we left the conversation; then I went back and no one ever said, why'd you spend so much time with him?
- Tom Glenn told you that John had gotten a past life reading on you?
- Lou Yes.
- Tom Did he say anything else about that?
- Lou Just that he gets these from Jim. I always had an idea that I had what was maybe a Catholic version of karma. I always looked at past lives, and I believed you get what you put out there. Therefore, I would like to think that karma does exist and that past lives do exist, so I guess I wasn't your average Catholic in that respect. Maybe the dogma of Catholicism wouldn't allow for that, but by the same token, that would seem fair; that is the way I always looked at it.

Larry John never talked to you and told you that you were with him in a past life?

Lou No, never talked about that. There were time periods though that he would invite me in, and literally time would almost stand still; we would go on, and I'm a talker, but the man could out talk me. We would go for hours, which Tom knows, because he would be waiting for him to come home for dinner; my wife would say, Oh, you must have been with Mr. Fetzer. He'd call me at two o'clock, three o'clock, and we'd forget all about time.

Larry It wasn't really business matters? It was spirituality?

Lou It could be everything.

Larry Okay.

Lou It wasn't me asking to see him. When I would ask to see him, it would be, Here's the agenda, and he'd say, "Come on down, let's talk about it," or "What do I have to sign off on?" Typically it was more, "Let's come down. I want to just chat." It could cover a wide range of subjects.

Larry Did he ever bring out the Ouija board?

Lou We talked about Ouija boards, but he didn't bring that out. We made no decisions.

Larry What would he say about it?

Lou Oh, we talked about the fact that, sometimes there are all kinds of influences out there that can help you in your life, including things like a Ouija board. I talked about, as a kid growing up, we had a Ouija board. We wondered, was it really your impulses that were driving you? Or was it some kind of outside help? Mr. Fetzer said, "Of course it's outside help." I thought that, as kids when you're doing it, you know that you think it's so. Then we talked about when he was using the dowser down in Tucson, searching for water. I was really kind of curious. Did that really work?

Tom What did he say about that?

Lou Oh, he said, Of course! He said when he first tried it, it was like he had a certain doubt himself; but he said when he held the dowser and he felt the pull, he knew that this was real. I said that I found out later, on doing experientials, you can go in with a total disbelief on an experiential, and then be totally convinced after it. I said to myself, I don't know why I was blinded to that or why I had that out there, but if I release that, all of a sudden I know what I know. If you know that you've left your body, you know that you've left your body. If someone told me

before that you're leaving your body, I'd say, Oh yeah, that's good. But when it happens to you, and you say, that's happened to me.

Larry Did you ever try dowsing?

Lou Never tried—I have held like a dowsing stick. I have never said, I really have that energy flow through me, mainly because I never had a need to.

Larry You always had water.

Lou Well yes, I'd turn on the tap.

Tom He was in Phoenix, so he didn't always have water.

Lou I know water is always important; I guess I found more experiential things interesting, like a sweat lodge, or like the shamans, or the holotropic breathwork. For example, I had it through Wink (Franklin), because we had the idea of, if you really want to look into your subconscious, should you try LSD? Also, I talked with Judy Skutch, and Judy always found this interesting; she would talk about it, because she's the one who helped John and Willis Harman when John did his. I said, "Judy, have you ever tried LSD?" She said no, but her husband, who had worked for the government for the Rand Corporation, had. I thought, wait a minute, this is the last guy in the world I would have expected to participate with LSD. Then we talked about experiences and I asked, "Would you like to experience that?" She said, "I don't know if I need it."

Again, you overcome your fear of trying something that you might think could have detrimental effects on you; and you consider the idea of, wouldn't you really like to open up that part of your consciousness to it? I've dealt with meditation a lot, with different folks. I have no doubt that there are what I'd call the shortcuts through the subconscious there; but I almost prefer to say, if there are ways, like holotropic breathwork, to do it, why would I need to use a hallucinogen? Of course, there are other people that believe in all the other methods.

Larry There seems to be a concept coming out that John felt he had a lot of power, but he was really afraid to use it. I'm not sure why he was afraid to, whether he thought that maybe it was linked a little bit with the dark side, and that he could go over there.

Lou Yes, in the discussions with him, I would say that he had a grounding from his mother that followed him until his 80's, when he was talking to me. She was a Mennonite (Ed. Note: then a 7<sup>th</sup> day Adventist). She had put into him this fear of not being, a humble-type person, that you're not to be boastful. There's a whole side of that that I don't think he ever forgot, and that's why when people say, it was all about Mr. Fetzer. I'd say no way. When I was talking to him in '88, '89, this guy still remembered his mother and how pride does get in the way of

everything. That was part of the problem with his LSD experiment; he felt that he had violated that by being almost godlike. That would have been sacrilegious to his mother. When he heard his voice on the tapes, this recollection of his mother lecturing him came back, and made him feel like he had misbehaved. I would say that he carried that lifelong teaching, from the time he probably was a little kid all the way to the end of his life. It was like the snowball example that you (Tom) referred to. He picked up things, and he would pick and choose as he carried forth in his life, but I don't think he forgot some things that he carried his entire life, and that was one of them.

Larry Yes, and I don't think he fully trusted his own intuition either. There is a concept that he felt things and wanted to trust it, but he had to have it validated by mediums and different people like that.

Lou I'd say yes and no. I think certainly by the time that I was dealing with him, he had a huge amount of experience of what worked, and what didn't work; but he would give you the impression that he truly trusted his intuition. Sometimes he looked for validation of those, maybe after the fact. Then he was looking at it and saying, "Of course, I had to validate that," I think was more evidence that he did have still an experimental nature. Even when he was in his 80's, someone could say, I've got this new thing, it's a special resonance with a subtle energy, he would try anything. Someone might ask, Why are you risking doing this at your age? You had mentioned he was taking some of the Insight trainings at 87.

Tom He was doing personal and spiritual growth training at 87, dragging me along.

Lou To say that he wanted validation of some of this stuff, yes; but I'd say he definitely trusted his intuition.

Tom I'm trying to think of an analogy. If you're a good athlete and you have good muscles and you can lift whatever or let's say you're—

Lou You could relate it to his business.

Tom You're a good math student and you have a bachelor's degree in it, you're really good at it; but if you can find a Ph.D. who's a genius, you will defer to that person. John was powerful and knew it and used it; by the time I was with him, he had very good intuition and he knew it and he used it. But if he could find somebody with direct contact to the other side, more than he had, he would take advantage of that. I think that was confidence, because people would think he was crazy and he didn't care. He would do it anyway. There was a little bit of being naïve, maybe, but I don't think it was fear, or lack of trust of his own intuition.

Lou Then that's also true in his business dealings. He would come up with an idea and say, this is something that will work. In a lot of cases then he would go out

and put real hard money on it. Not all of those things did work, but the ones that did work really sustained him and grew his asset wealth.

Larry Do you know about the Killick connection?

Lou Ken Killick?

Larry Yes.

Lou Only through talking to other people.

Larry Evidently he gave John some bad advice, based on being a medium, in the baseball sphere; I'm wondering if that went against John's intuition and that's why he got rid of him. In other words, he followed Killick's advice against his own intuition.

Lou He never mentioned Ken Killick. I knew of Ken Killick more from hearing Mike Gergely and other folks talk about him, so I never knew him.

Tom It may have been a cautionary tale, because certain things he asked Jim Gordon about, but he never asked him for practical advice on practical matters, no way. He did use Jim's abilities, but to assess people, because that's like intel. That's background information; but to say, Should I do this, or should I do that? I think he learned his lesson with Killick. I think he just learned a lesson is all. But John was like a riverboat gambler, so he would just try things. I don't think he was afraid to try things.

Lou Another thing, you might have called it intuition, but it was his sense of knowing; maybe it was one of his noetic senses. If you talked to Ed Mitchell, who was the founder of IONS, he said John was always certain of the things that he wanted. I said, "What really did he want from IONS?" He said, "He came to me and said, you know Ed, I really like what you're doing here; but what I want you to prove is something I already know." Ed said, "What's that?" "I know that consciousness survives death. I want you to prove it." Ed said, "John, that's going to be difficult, but we'll try." You know he had certain viewpoints that were probably beyond intuition.

Larry That's interesting, because I got the idea that he was so fascinated with that because he wanted to know for himself. But you think he was certain of it?

Lou The way in which Ed said John knew that, it did. You see it in some of his writings, and I think this goes back to even in America's Agony in '68. Through his writing he is talking about the future, as if he already knows that future. What I also found interesting about that book in '68 was that it's as practical in '88 as it was in '68, and it's as practical in 2008. It really is timeless in some of the things

he's talking about there; but he had certain ideas that were part of his belief system that he would like to see proven.

Tom I watched him right up to within a couple hours of his death, going through the beginning of the death process. It was intense for him, but he wasn't afraid. No, he really wasn't, so he knew. I think it was the Mennonite thing, because I saw the same thing in my own father, who was also raised with a small town, Indiana Mennonite upbringing. There's this self-deprecation that they're raised with and they practice that. I think John had a side of him that loved to be in the limelight and to be the big cheese, but this upbringing, this self-deprecating upbringing, it didn't trip him up, it just held him in check.

Larry Yes, it reined him in.

Tom It held him in check. A man would say, I don't have intuition; or a man would say, I don't dream. It's just what a small town, Midwestern man would say. I don't have any of those feminine qualities, or I don't dream, even though he did.

Larry When he told Judy back in the 70's that he wished he could dream, do you think he was just being modest?

Lou I really do.

Tom All I can say firsthand is that, with me he was modest, because that's how he started out, saying 'I don't even dream'. Not only can't I meditate, but I don't even dream; but then over the breakfast table, when we would talk about them, he would say, "Oh, I had no dreams, except I had just this one little thing, but there wasn't anything to it." And it was really good.

Lou The characterization. One thing I recalled, I said, "I saw that last night in a dream." It was about a business deal we were working on. He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Well, I went to sleep, and for some reason it came to me, this issue we were dealing with, and I found a solution. The first thing I woke up this morning, I remembered exactly what I remembered in the dream." And he said, "Well, that's happened to me before, too." I think you could kind of 'trap' him; there are time periods where he would admit it and other time periods when he would say, "Oh, I don't remember."

Larry He had this dream about people picking his pockets.

Tom Exactly, and I think he kept a dream journal. This was before I met him, because I didn't see a dream journal.

Lou Did Jim start him on a dream journal?



- Tom I believe so. Part of it was his natural secrecy, and that was made easy for him by his upbringing, where a man wasn't boastful. To be boastful in that Mennonite, that branch of Protestantism was the worst = vanity was the worst sin for men. Women could be vain and have woman's intuition, but men were supposed to be practical, humble.
- Lou Do you think that's why he was so secretive with Judy? Because Judy was exposing him to a lot of these areas that he wanted to explore, but he didn't particularly want too many people to know he was exploring these areas. I think that could also apply to that.
- Larry Yes, he would be vulnerable if they knew, I think.
- Lou I don't think it was so much about the public as much as it was about his upbringing; because when you own the Detroit Tigers and you're a broadcast executive, you're immune to a lot. It wasn't like he was running for public office.
- Tom He hid out as the owner of the Tigers, too, and he didn't have to. There was no reason for him to be secretive about the Tigers. Why would he have? But back then, the Detroit Press hated him because they considered him a hermit. That was just the natural characteristic of him, to be secretive like that.
- Larry Defense mechanism, in a way.
- Tom I think, that's just how he did it.
- Lou When you talk about the sale of the Tigers, we've got to keep it out of Detroit, because we don't want Coleman Young getting in there and then taking a piece of the action. Was that truly going to be the problem or not? Or was that just the way in which he wanted to deal?
- Tom We can say with spirituality there was a reason for it, because he was living here in the Bible Belt and was afraid of losing advertising; so there is a practical side. But with the Tigers, he'd have been better off giving interviews to the press. His business would have been better.
- Lou Although as to the major league ownership, he'd have to still realize that he saw himself more as a Walter O'Malley—because Walter was the National League representative, and John was the American League representative—than he saw of the upstarts, represented by Veeck. He always thought Veeck was just a big loud mouth. He disliked most of the people he saw that sought the press out. I think he said, "Okay, in addition to everything else, that's not me." You know, he was the distinguished gray fox.
- Tom But he was the most secretive. He was the secretive one.

Larry But on the other hand—

Lou I think Gene Autry was probably as secretive as him. They were of the same ilk.

Tom He got in the business later, but in the early 60's John was the hermit.

Larry He was a hermit, but on the other hand he really enjoyed publicity in a way. He enjoyed having a building named after him. He wanted that. I interviewed him for the Kalamazoo book in 1980, and he was very humble, but you could tell he was also pleased that he was having his story written.

Lou I talked to him about this building because I said to him, "My God, you go over to the broadcast house and you see that it's an old car dealership—it's cleaned up but it's pretty much third-rate type of stuff." He liked to buy used equipment, and all that. Then I said, "Then you come here and, Mr. Fetzer, it's like you're lining this thing with gold on the walls." He'd smile and smirk and say, "Yes, that's not exactly the way I planned it." I said, "Yes, but you're not displeased at the way it came out." He said, "Probably not." There were both sides that he was trying to reveal. By the same token, it was like he wanted people to know that he was successful, he had done something; I still think he had pride in himself, but he also wanted to tone that down, so he wouldn't think in the back of his mind of his mother slapping him on his head saying, "John, don't be that way." But he enjoyed success like anyone else.

Tom Sure. That's it.

Larry Sure.

Lou As I said, this building was certainly far, far different than anything he had been associated with, even with good old Bruce always saying, "Gee Mr. Fetzer, you shouldn't spend the money." Well, why? You're going, "Bruce, shut up."

Tom He bought these multi-million dollar houses in Hawaii. He had us buy him a \$100,000 Mercedes. I came over here with him many times while the place was being built, from the concrete foundation all the way up. He never expressed displeasure about this place being too ostentatious, never. Probably when he saw the dollars on a piece of paper he went apoplectic.

Larry That was a huge overrun, wasn't it?

Lou It was almost double the budget, yes, but then again, that might have bothered him from the standpoint of being inefficient.

Tom When he saw it on a piece of paper.

Lou But to look at the finished product—

Tom He was very proud.

Lou Very proud.

Tom All the way through. We wouldn't have come out here otherwise. He would have fumed or not come, or he'd have stopped it; but he always was very proud of it. This is his great pyramid. This is like the great pyramid of John Fetzer. He was happy about it in all its glory, and he had a gold leafed hall of records put in down there.

Larry Didn't he say that he didn't like to use the bathroom, because there was gold?

Lou It was pretty fancy. It wasn't gold leaf but it was as expensive, let's say that.

Tom For his day, compared to the house which was built in the early 40's, and then was falling apart when we were living there.

Lou Of course, they didn't want to change anything. They'd been there with his wife, so the rugs are threadbare.

Tom He had a bigger house, but it wasn't as nice as the house I was living in, back in Grand Haven. It was so old, and had not been modernized, and it was all creaky.

Larry Did he ever bring out the pendulum?

Lou Not to me.

Larry Okay.

Lou We talked about the dowsing and that kind of thing, and I've heard Bruce's story on that.

Larry How about the crystal?

Lou Crystals were always around, but you see, crystals were part of the Fetzer Institute.

Larry But you didn't have your own? Several people had their own small crystals.

Lou By the time I got there, they already had the crystal burying party, so I had crystals on my desk. I didn't think anything of the crystal. We talked about crystals, especially, when we talked about the fact that it was really the crystal in the crystal set that started his entire career.

Larry He talked about that, did he?

Lou Oh yes, because that's in the biography. Also remember, it had already been in the Encore Magazine. I'd say the whole uniqueness about was more of a commonplace. Everyone knew that.

Larry He looked at it as sort of an occult thing, right or am I wrong?

Lou Not to me. To me, crystals always related to the fact of energy, and certainly in the case of his industry. To him it had some special meanings. We never went to the occult with them in the discussions I had with him.

Larry Okay.

Tom Did he ever talk with you about the hologram?

Lou The hologram was getting more feeble when we started getting into the hologram. He had a big belief that that hologram was going to represent, really, his energy. I never quite understood the hologram so much, until I met Bruce. Most of my information on the hologram came from Bruce, not from Mr. Fetzer. It seemed that the hologram was to, in a sense, demarcate his energy in the building. That is the way I looked at his interpretation of what the hologram was representing. I don't know whether it was coming from 'where' in the universe to here.

Larry Did you get to know Jim Gordon quite well?

Lou No, I didn't really know Jim Gordon until after Mr. Fetzer's death.

Larry Okay.

Lou I did not really know him before. I knew of him, but I did not know Jim.

Larry Okay, so you weren't in the meetings.

Lou Monday night groups had already stopped before I came.

Tom The Monday night groups had stopped before I had started, in 1985.

Lou With my work with Mr. Fetzer, the Monday night group never came up.

Larry Never even came up.

Lou Sister Elizabeth did one time, because she came over and did a listening workshop course. He asked me how that went, and I said, "Oh, I thought I was actually pretty positive." I had really very few interactions with Mike Gergely, until after the fact. A little bit beforehand, but more after Mr. Fetzer's death.

Tom Those Monday night groups and those people were really his life. But he had moved on. I think Sister Liz came to the house once and was welcome. It might have been a Christmas or something. Carolyn was always welcome, but she only came over rarely. I never saw Mike until when he was changing the Trust.

He had this notion that the Monday night group was moving too slow, and he tried to get them to move, faster to teach them faster. Who did he speak of this notion to with us? Maybe Judy talked about that,. It was like he had knowledge that most of the group was moving too slow within his view.

Larry That was Judy's group, wasn't it?

Tom He also said that about the Monday night group.

Larry Did he?

Tom He expressed that to me, that they had just moved a little too slow, or got caught up in past lives too much; he moved on, especially once he got initiated into MSIA. Then you have that set of people. You had Jim and myself who were doing the same practice; and Cleora and Bruce were doing the same practice. If you didn't move into the MSIA thing at that point, in '85, '86, '87, he really... Then he did these two Insight trainings, the personal growth trainings that were connected with MSIA; he was gathering a whole other group of younger people who were into it. They were into MSIA, thing so they weren't people he had to teach metaphysics to. They were people who had metaphysical backgrounds that could match his.

Larry He wanted to learn from them.

Tom I think he felt like they were more of a bunch of equals, even though he was so much older. Everybody respected and admired him; and he was the rich guy in town, so everybody was in awe of him. As far as the metaphysical part, he never felt like he had to teach us, or to bring us along and teach us things. With the Monday night group, he did feel that way.

Larry Lou, did he ever encourage you to read anything like A Course in Miracles, or anything else?

Lou Did he encourage me? I read America's Agony, and then we'd start talking. Of course, we brought up A Course in Miracles, and the biography and how he got to know about that. Again, a lot of the relationship that I had with Mr. Fetzer became personal. When people deal with their own wealth, it's another one of his nine lives; there were not too many people he shared that with. A lot of our discussions were not discussions we would hold with too many other people, and that had a certain consuming nature all its own.

Larry You know, I wonder if he was worried about being wealthy, as far as his spirituality went. He was raised with the Biblical idea that it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to heaven. On the other hand, there are some religions, like Calvinism, that teach that wealth is a sign that you're of the elect.

Lou He had made reference, in prior lives though, that he had always been able to accumulate resources, so I never saw the side of him that said, I'm worried that I'm this wealthy.

Larry Okay.

Lou I think he more was concerned about the Institute; we talked about his, in the fall or summer of '89, no, '90. He said, "I want to hire you to run my personal account." I was surprised and said, "What are you talking about?" We went through this whole process, in which I was trying to figure out what was he getting at. We ended up doing a two paragraph contract, detailing exactly what he wanted. It answered the question, what is the outcome that you're expecting me to perform? It was the strangest contract I've ever done with an individual. It was more of, 'I want you around here, I want to talk to you; you can give me comments on this; you're my personal adviser per se, and financial advisor. Later on, by talking to Jay Fishman, and by talking to other folks, I found out Mr. Fetzer had some other motivations.

Tom Right, and John being John, he also had Jay Fishman thinking he had the same role. So that was John.

Lou The biggest thing he said was, "You can't share what you're doing for me with Bruce." He knew Bruce and I were pretty close. He said, "Bruce thinks this is his role and that this will be his role." Then he said, "Bruce will have another role." He said, "This is the role I want you to have." It was one of those situations where then Bruce found out, because the first thing he did when he was executor was he opened the vault. And there was my contract in it.

Then I told Bruce, "Okay, let me tell you the rest of the story, from my side, so you don't think that I'm trying to withhold this from you." But the only thing I asked Mr. Fetzer was, please share this with Rob, because I don't want the Institute thinking I've got a side agreement with the founder that somehow taints the work.

Tom Because Lou was working for the Institute.

Lou I'm working for the Institute; and this work is being directly paid by the Founder to me, for dealing with his personal assets, which had no bearing at all to the Institute. I didn't want there to be seen some kind of conflict I was having there.

Tom My take on that is, if he had that kind of issue, and the Mennonite upbringing may have included that, I think by the time I met him he had solved that, because the notion that it was all going into this non-profit fixed that.

Larry Resolved it all.

Tom Reading the channelings from Jim, whether it was Jesus or the Archangel Michael or Kato or Kuthumi, this organization was going to be a great thing, and praising him for having done it, that it had turned into a big plus for him. By the time I came in '85, there was no concern; but that may have been one of the reasons he did it that way in the first place. Of course, he didn't have children, so he had nobody to leave his estate to.

Larry Do you think he wanted Bruce to get fired there at the end?

Lou We discussed it. I've related it to Bruce. The way in which we discussed it would be that, if Bruce was not an employee of the Institute, could there be some great life experiences that he could accrue, which could bring back and help this Institute in the long term? It wasn't looked at as, you should never be around here. It was more of; how do you encourage him to go out and get additional life experience? I tried to say to Bruce, it wasn't done in any mean or intentional way. And I said I agree with you. There were a lot of life experiences out there and having other jobs might really open your eyes. Clearly Bruce had had one job at Union Carbide, and then he was working for John Fetzer. As Mr. Fetzer said, "He's my little pup," and he said, "The pup needs to go out and get other experiences." I said, "I couldn't agree with you more."

Tom John was in favor of it, in your view?

Lou Oh, absolutely.

Tom You think it was John's idea?

Lou I don't know if it was his idea or not, but I think he was convinced that there were benefits to Bruce going out and getting additional experience.

Tom I couldn't have said for certain, one way or the other. I didn't know John was in favor of it or against it, although it was certainly a stress on him, the way he shared with me about it. I advised him against it, so that was my take. I was afraid it would kill him, that when it came right down to it, I was afraid he wouldn't be able to take it.

Lou I think he saw it as a positive. There was no emotion, one way or the other. It was more, what do you think? Any time you can get more experience, you bring a lot more to the table. There was a concern that maybe he had smothered Bruce a little bit too much, because we kept saying, when is he going to learn how to do

this or this.” I just said, “You know, sometimes it’s going to be difficult when you’re around him for him to get that kind of experience.” And Jay had discussions with Mr. Fetzer as well, because he was supposed to be training Bruce; there were a lot of folks that Mr. Fetzer said, Okay, help me with Bruce.

Tom Bruce was struggling here (at the Institute building) I guess. He wasn’t thriving here - John would share that. He talked to me about that, several times. It was hard for John to hear that, and to realize that; he didn’t really know what to make of that, because he shared with me that he hoped Bruce would work and learn under Rob. Bruce was struggling, although I’m not saying that in John’s mind that meant he had to go.

Lou Well, and Bruce had a—

Tom My only concern John. I just thought, when it comes down to the nitty gritty, when he’s actually firing his great nephew, is he going to be able to survive this? Is his health such that he can—I don’t think he did well with it in the end. It was very emotionally tough for him, tough on him. It wasn’t a positive for him.

Larry I get the impression that he wanted it done before he died so that he could rest easy.

Tom He didn’t then rest easy at the end.

Larry No?

Tom No.

Lou But you’ve also got to remember —

Tom In other words, he didn’t say, Okay, now I can go. That’s what I mean. He was hoping that by moving to Hawaii he would live for two or three more years.

Lou I don’t know how this plays into it, but Mr. Fetzer had to fire his father. I’ve heard that story from Mr. Fetzer, from Bill Wishman, and I’ve heard it from Carl Lee. Bruce looks at it as though his dad decided to go down to North Carolina and open this boat place. Mr. Fetzer funded it, basically saying, how am I going to support him leaving? There’s a different side of the story when you talk to the operating [staff?].

Tom The only reason we moved to Hawaii was that he thought it would buy him a few more years.

Larry Is that right?



Tom That was the only reason.

Lou We talked about the fact that he had congestive heart failure. He first said we should look at Florida. Arizona was out because it actually got kind of cold, too cold for him. He first came back and said Florida. Then Jim came by and said it should be Hawaii; when you looked at what would be the best kind of atmosphere for him, Hawaii had a lot of the ingredients. I agree with Tom. I think he was hoping to get a couple more years.

Larry But he also moved there because Jim Gordon was going to live next to him, right?

Tom All I know is my role in that, which is what I saw: Hawaii was fine with John. They had done baseball meetings there, and he liked it. From my point of view, it was far enough away that it would be hard for him to get back in the business. The Internet wasn't going then, and it would get him far enough away that he would have a chance maybe to heal for a couple of years.

Lou Well, as he told me, this was his chance to really devote himself to spirit.

Tom Yes.

Lou So he did see the benefit of being in a remote location.

Larry Spirit as opposed to business.

Lou Yes, because he kept saying, we've got to turn this over. I would call him in Hawaii, and he would say, Okay, I trust you, just do that. I've got to devote my time [to spirit??].

Tom To me he said he would go, but only if Jim would go; then when I went to Jim and said, "Would you move to Hawaii?," he said, "Well, I would if John would." For me, it seemed like both of them were doing this little dance about it. I put the two together in a room and said, "You're saying you'll go if he'll go, and you're saying you'll go if he'll go, so let's settle this."

Larry So you brokered it.

Tom Let's settle it. But whether either of them had any other motives or things going on, I didn't see it at the time. Any notion that Jim was trying to finagle something, I never got that sense at the time. I don't think that Jim knew that John was going to put the houses in ILM's name. That was a total surprise to Jim. I knew it; when John decided to do that, he told me that. I knew it, and John even gave me the—

Lou Initially they weren't going to, but he couldn't get into the Jefferson Trust; ~~thing~~, so it made more sense to liquidate and fund it all.

Tom Then when the end came he was, he was fine because he was doing his meditation practice. He had a fairly intense but fairly conscious transition. I wasn't there the last two hours, because he was with Jim. But that wasn't what his plan was.

Larry To die right then?

Tom Correct. It was very stressful when they actually had the Board meeting there. Whatever else they were talking about, the Moyers Series. But there was also the issue of firing Bruce, because Rob came in, and they were talking about it. It was really intense and very stressful for John.

Larry It figures in with almost any religious person, but it's a dichotomy. If, in fact, John knew that his consciousness was going to survive, then why would anybody be afraid to die? If you believe in heaven and you're going to heaven, why are you afraid to die?

Tom Normally? A normal person?

Larry Yes, anybody, if they believe firmly that there's something better waiting for them.

Tom They don't believe it firmly. They're scared to death. It's that they hope.

Lou I call it human nature and it's = what is it? The flight response? Because you basically say, I'm taking my last breath. No, I'm going to try to breathe again.

Larry Yeah.

Lou I do think, when it comes to the very end, it's instinctual to say, I want to survive, much like the body. When someone has a terminal illness, and you watch the body slowly but surely shut down those things that are the least vital; then it's the vital things at the end that finally go. That's human nature.

Larry It is. It definitely is.

Lou I don't think there's necessarily fear in it, and I do think he had a certain acceptance of it

Tom For most people, they hope that there's heaven or something. But they don't know it. I think for most people, there is a fear of death because they hope, but they don't know it for sure. Then the life force goes out of the body, usually, and not that easily, since it's been stuck in there for all those years. People that haven't been astral traveling, they don't know how to get out; it's not that easy to get out, so there is pain in the end. It is intense and can be frightening.

Lou Do you refer to any out-of-body experience as astral travel?

Tom When you astral travel, it's like you get in the car and you go, or you get in the rocket ship, the engine comes on and roars, and you go. You know you're here, then here, then here, then here. You go through the ceiling, you go through the roof, and you go. It's like driving a car: When you're 16, the first time you drive a car, you're conscious of everything you do. But later on, you get in the car, you don't even know you did it, and suddenly you're there, especially if you're texting. Next thing you know you're at the location, and you say, "How did I get here?" It gets that way in out-of-body traveling, where you stop being conscious of every inch of the journey. That is different than some other experiences where you're suddenly somewhere else. That astral travel, you actually—you go!

Larry You experience going.

Tom The first time I went out I went right through the rafters. I saw the nails in the two-by-fours, and wondered if I was going to get stuck along the way.

Larry That's the fear part, isn't it, not knowing whether you'll find your way back?

Tom Turn around and see your body laying down there.

Lou Weren't you afraid that you couldn't find your way back?

Tom No, I had no fear of doing it. I don't know why. I just did it. I didn't go that far the first time, so that's one thing. I thought, Okay, this is enough for the first time. No, I didn't think I'd get lost. So that's different than, say, the holotropic breathwork or the shamanism, when you suddenly find yourself somewhere else.

Lou Holotropic breathwork, I remember coming back and then being in the room looking down at all this.

Tom There you go.

Lou To me that was the same experience.

Tom Absolutely.

Lou Okay.

Tom Once that happens, then you know that your consciousness, whether it survives death or whether it's not connected to the body. You know it because you've experienced it. Like you say, you've just experienced that. I would take John's nine-year-old, ten-year-old experience as that. That's how I see it. That's how I relate to it, because it's similar to what I can picture. The other one, I don't know. Saying "Lord, if you let me live I'll dedicate my life to you," I don't know. To

- me that sounds a little more like something you might make up afterwards, but maybe not. If you wake up and you survive the next morning, if that's the story, it's not the same kind of spiritual experience.
- Lou The thing is, you've got to question, how much did his mother, his sister, his father and his stepfather influence that recollection?
- Tom To me that one sounds like a religious experience. Then in one version it sounds like he's saying he made that pledge in the months he spent in bed afterwards.
- Lou As to the other experience (the elevator), he talks about it; this is what was written in the Thinnies book. John talks about the elevator stalling, and then the visualization came to him. He maybe remembers it in different ways, and tells it to different people, but there he said it was clear as a bell.
- Larry It wasn't a dream at night.
- Lou It was in daytime. This is the only building in town that had an elevator, and his mother worked on the second floor; he got in the elevator and instead of the operator being in there, he pushed the button and the thing stalled; then he has this experience. Then somehow it continues and he gets out, and he says he's never forgotten it.
- Tom Another part to that is, it is typical to experience an out-of-body experience as an elevator going up. That is fairly typical from what you can read; it sometimes gets into a vivid dream experience, or a vivid dream that you're in an elevator. That's why we'll never know for sure whether it was a vivid dream of an elevator or—but it doesn't really matter.
- Lou Yes, he's recalling it 80 years later. He can make it whatever he wants to make it.
- Tom It doesn't really matter, because if you have this vivid dream of seeing Jesus and it stays with you all of your life, it doesn't matter what the nuts and bolts of that are. It's still a very impactful spiritual experience. It doesn't really matter. And I've had a few spiritual experiences when I was a child that I couldn't really tell you at this point exactly. My recollection is of a recollection, if you know what I'm saying.
- Larry Yes.
- Tom I had a few experiences when I was a child, and I couldn't tell you for sure. I don't think they were dreams, but you know how recollection goes.
- Larry Becomes dream like.
- Tom Absolutely.

Lou Especially when you look at the kind of events that occurred in his life that dramatically changed the world; and not only changed the world but changed him. I mean, imagine going through the heart of the Depression.

Larry Both World Wars.

Lou Both World Wars, World War I and World War II. There are so many events that occurred in his life, that you do wonder, by the time you get into your 80's, how do you recall it and exactly what is that story.

Tom The fact of the matter is he's a rare bird. He's not the only person interested in metaphysics, he's not the only true believer in metaphysics, but they're rare. For him to go all the way through his life, even in his later 80's, and to be just as wide eyed and enthusiastic about it as he was at 30. I don't think that comes from just interest.

Lou To go through all 33 training sessions with the Masons. Look at all the different things he experienced.

Tom Take 33 Masonic classes, that's a drudgery.

Lou A huge commitment.

Tom That's a drudgery.

Lou Insight classes: He was constantly saying, what else is there to learn?

Tom This is my opinion, but you have to have a very powerful trigger—something that triggered that, a very powerful experience, not just, "This looks interesting." That wouldn't carry you through for 90 years, I don't think.

Lou Well, is that it?

Larry Well, unless you have something that—

Tom He'll think of a good one. Carolyn told us two best stories last night.

Lou We said, why weren't those in the interview?

Tom I went up to her afterwards, and I said, "I'm not going to give you a hug. You just told two stories that were [???]." We'll just grab her again in the summer, because we need to anyway. I think that started a process for her.

Larry So the final edit of the Thinnes book didn't have Tom Thinnes' name on it?

Lou We left his name on it. I didn't want to take his name off it.

Larry But you said it was totally different from what he wrote?

Lou It's substantially different, but we believe that the final version is more readable, tells the story a little bit better. Thinnes worked ten years on trying to gather some of the information.

Tom He wasn't really a good writer, surprisingly.

Lou No.

Larry He uses too many clichés. I know his writing.

Lou Yes, his stories in there are told, but not necessarily in the words that he would use.

Larry So there's not really information deleted?

Lou No, the information is printed. There was only one person who was trying to delete information, and that was Mr. Fetzer. We'd say, you can't do that so stop it.

Tom But it was just like you say. It was surprisingly kind of trite. Or very low brow. I don't mean to knock on Tom particularly, but I expected it to be much more sophisticated writing.